



Dorchester Skipjack Committee

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Passengers watch as skipjack Nathan of Dorchester crew pull the oyster dredge onboard. A Volunteer Orientation session will be held on March 24th for sail crew, docents, maintenance and administrative positions. Crew members, left to right, Bud Marseilles, Hermann Hasken and Jim Leech haul the hand dredge.



Volunteer Opportunities on the *Nathan of Dorchester*

The skipjack *Nathan of Dorchester* and her crew of volunteers are preparing for another busy summer. Through public sails and private charters, *Nathan* provides over 1,500 passengers each year with the opportunity to sail on a skipjack, experience oyster dredging, and learn about the Chesapeake Bay and the days when the oyster was king of the Eastern Shore economy. *Nathan* sails from Long Wharf in Cambridge every Saturday and one Sunday each month from May thru October taking the public on short cruises on the Choptank River.

The *Nathan of Dorchester* is a U.S. Coast Guard registered passenger carrying vessel commanded by a licensed captain and is sailed by a thoroughly trained volunteer crew. Operating a wooden sailing vessel takes all kinds of volunteers, working both on the boat and off. All new volunteers undergo an extensive training program in their area of interest. Volunteers maintain the boat and prepare it for annual U.S. Coast Guard inspections. Volunteers interested in local history and bay ecology serve as on-board docents, and those interested in sailing, train and serve as sail crew members. Other volunteers register passengers, book charters, and perform the administrative tasks that enable *Nathan* to be underway about 100 days during the season.

New and returning sail crew members train together. To reach and maintain sail crew status, each volunteer must demonstrate the skills needed to sail a wooden boat using the technology of the 1890's, dredge for oysters, often while under sail, be knowledgeable of all emergency procedures, and know how to keep passengers safe and comfortable during their skipjack experience.

There are volunteer opportunities for sail crew, maintenance, docents, and administrative positions. A volunteer orientation session will be held Monday evening March 24th at the Dorchester Public Library, Cambridge.

For more information, to charter the boat or to volunteer, contact the Dorchester Skipjack Committee at 410-228-7141 or visit its website, www.skipjack-nathan.org.

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